

wells will compel the Mullah's force to break up since the watering difficulties will be very great. The capture of some of the enemy's men by our spies will enable us to discover where the Mullah had fixed his head-quarters; at present we have no information on this point whatever, though it is evident that he is at no great distance from this place.

To-morrow, the 7th instant, as most of the transport animals return to Dibit to bring up supplies with the main column, we shall be left with a small number of transport animals until the 17th instant. The interval will, however, be utilized to thoroughly reconnoitre the country round, so that upon the arrival of the main column an advance will be made at once on any collection of the enemy within striking distance.

I have been obliged to ask for more supply officers, as the peculiar nature of operations in this country, and the long lines of communication to be kept open to Obbia, render it very necessary that this department should be thoroughly well supplied with a staff, and the move of the flying column to Galkayu has disclosed the fact that the staff of the Supply Department is quite inadequate, so much so, that on the march up here, I experienced much difficulty in carrying out the proper supply duties of the force.

I have addressed a communication to the Italian Representative accompanying the force, asking him to inform me without delay as to the date on which he intends to take over the occupation of this place, in order that he may notify to his Government the occupation of Mudug.

The marches up here have been extremely hot and trying, but the troops have borne them well. The mounted troops particularly have had an arduous time, but Major Kenna's good management has so far resulted in the loss of only one Mounted Infantry horse.

The route of our advance is fairly well watered, but considerable organization is necessary at each watering place to make the utmost use of the wells possible.

I shall at once endeavour to obtain communication with Bohotle, viâ Damot, which place I hope has been occupied by the flying column from Bohotle.

The health of both Officers and men remains excellent.

I have, &c.,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,  
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Galkayu,

SIR, 14th March, 1903.

I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter I have addressed to Count Lovatelli who has been the representative of the Italian Government with this force.

Count Lovatelli has been most loyal in his co-operation, and it is with great regret that I have heard of his recall.

I have, &c.,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,  
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

From Brigadier-General W. H. Manning, Commanding Somaliland Field Force, to Count G. Lovatelli, Royal Italian Navy.

Galkayu,

SIR, 14th March, 1903.

It is with much regret that I understand that you are leaving for the coast under orders from your Government.

I cannot allow you to depart without placing upon record my great appreciation of the assistance at all times rendered by you to the Somaliland Field Force from its landing up till now, and especially during the time at Obbia when great difficulties were experienced in endeavouring to work smoothly with Yusuf Ali. I am much indebted to you for the loyal co-operation given by you in all dealings with Yusuf Ali, and for the attempts made by you to bring him to reason.

Two points appear to me to require to be made clear, concerning which some misapprehension appears to have arisen.

Since the arrival of British troops at Obbia on the 26th December, the village of Obbia has never been surrounded by troops in the sense that any attempt was made to prevent egress by the inhabitants.

Military Police were employed on the outskirts of the village to prevent Somali followers of the force, and others, from entering the village, against whom complaints had been made by Yusuf Ali, and to enforce the order which placed the village of Obbia out of bounds to troops and followers.

As you are aware, Yusuf Ali had at no time complained of the surrounding of his village, and he had been informed that soldiers had been stationed near the few huts forming the village in order to prevent any possibility of trouble arising from Somali followers, or others, entering these huts and causing disturbance.

The house of Yusuf Ali after his deportation was placed under a guard to prevent its being looted by Somalis or others, since it was known that property of value was in the house.

The whole of his property was thus saved, and has been taken possession of by the Italian officials.

About Rs. 30,000 were found in Yusuf Ali's house.

Had a guard not been posted it is probable that this money would have been stolen.

Some time elapsed before the step of placing this guard on the house was taken, awaiting a guard from the Italian man-of-war "Caprera," which, however, was not sent.

In complying with your request for this guard, I considered that you were acting in the best interests of your Government, and I fully concurred in its necessity.

In a telegram the War Office have asked me to express to you regret that annoyance should have been caused by the publication in the press of a Reuter's telegram, purporting to come from Obbia, but evidently emanating from Aden, in which a distorted and incorrect version of the deportation of Yusuf Ali was given.

I have, &c.,

W. H. MANNING, Brigadier-General,  
Commanding Somaliland Field Force.

From Brigadier-General Manning, Commanding the Somaliland Field Force, to the Secretary of State for War.

Head-Quarters, Somaliland Field Force,  
Galadi, 3rd April, 1903.

SIR,  
1. I have the honour to report the progress of this Force since my last despatch.